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2 December 1965

During the DoD Worldwide Intelligence Production Management Conference, 25-29 October 1965, sponsored by DIA, a number of plans were presented having a direct bearing on the National Intelligence Survey (NIS). Below are OBI's comments on these proposals:

1. Coasts and Landing Beaches: DIA proposes a revised format of the NIS unit on the subject, with reduced text and a print-out of automated beach table information.

As yet, nothing has been produced on the basis of this revised format, and it may be many months before machine data problems are fully solved. The DIA proposals appear to call for more automation for this NIS section than for any other, but the full effect is still uncertain. It has been apparent in recently produced Coasts and Landing Beaches that there is a DIA tendency to curtail the number of beaches treated and to cut down on the description of coasts between beaches. The smaller beaches, however, and the landing places on stretches of coast without notable beaches are of prime interest to planners of small or covert operations. The staffs of the high level planners, to whom DIA sees the NIS directed, also need such information.

At this early stage, OBI will adopt a "wait and see" attitude. As the details of the DIA plans become known, careful consideration should be given to whether the proposal would fully satisfy existing requirements.

2. Weather and Climate: DIA proposes to reduce the amount of detail in this NIS section and to cut the total number of studies about in half by covering several contiguous small countries in a single volume. It proposes further to aim the studies at weather officers and to issue them unclassified. Upper air would be treated on a hemisphere basis.

OBI sees considerable advantage to be derived from publishing the NIS Weather and Climate sections on larger world areas and is now working on a proposal to this end for NIS Committee consideration. We also look with favor upon the production of Upper Air on a hemisphere basis to avoid much of the current unnecessary duplication.

DIA review(s) completed.

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Issuing the Weather and Climate unit on an unclassified or Official Use Only Basis seems feasible, despite some apparent problems, in the face of strong feeling that publication on this basis would better satisfy the principal users.

The proposal to reduce textual detail is viewed with some suspicion but would be acceptable if the product were still meaningful and responsive to requirements. The suggestion that the studies be aimed at weather officers is puzzling since that, in fact, has been the practice despite OBI efforts in the other direction. We would rather see these units broadened to be of greater use to a wider spectrum of civilian, agricultural, and industrial users.

The basic DIA proposal seems reasonable but we have to carefully study any move toward reducing the effectiveness of the text or narrow the scope of treatment.

3. Topography: DIA proposes "streamlining" this NIS section by eliminating all textual material, relying more on tables and some additional maps. It would then produce its own Terrain Study, described as broad in scope and consisting of topical and evaluative components, to meet the current needs of the commands.

Production of terrain studies is viewed by OBI as one of the most fundamental in basic intelligence and we would oppose any curtailment that would make it more difficult for the user to grasp the overall picture in a given area. Eliminating all text is too drastic a change. It would require enlargement of aprons and for some maps the addition of an extra legend sheet to accommodate the necessary tabular material.

We need to determine the DIA view of the relation between the NIS sections on Topography and its Standard Terrain Study. If the maps and tabular matter for the NIS would also be used in the STS, there would seem to be a better chance of continuation of this NIS production (although duplicative of the STS) than if the graphic and tabular items of each required separate effort by the contributor. It is not clear why the NIS could not, in the DIA view, be made responsive to command requirements.

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4. Urban Areas: DIA proposes to produce highly detailed tactical-type town plans as a substitute for the corresponding NIS unit on Urban Areas which DIA suggests is too "strategic oriented" to meet the needs of the command. It believes that the extant published NIS on this topic could continue to serve for many years as basic urban area intelligence.

This is the most drastic of the DIA proposals. The NIS base of published Urban Areas will not be valid indefinitely and many of the underdeveloped areas have yet to be covered. The General Survey cannot adequately cover urban areas to the depth necessary. Loss of this section to the NIS would be a severe blow to the adequacy of its military geography coverage upon which a variety of consumers have depended.

OBI would readily consider a new Urban Areas outline which would provide a product that would satisfy both NIS and DIA requirements. At the moment, however, we do not have a clear idea of what DIA considers to be essential to the commands.

5. Transportation: DIA has initiated production of Transportation Guides on Railways, Inland Waterways and Highways on a worldwide basis to be produced by the commands, the Guides purportedly are for operational utilization and, therefore, more detailed than the corresponding NIS sections.

Considerable duplication of the NIS in this instance must be assumed.

OBI currently is studying ways of improving the NIS Transportation coverage by combining transportation elements, where appropriate, as well as combining contiguous areas where this will be more meaningful. Further changes could be made if the DIA would surface command requirements that it apparently believes could best be met by its departmental production, although we recognize the legitimate requirement for operational support production in greater detail than the NIS.

6. Port Study: DIA is producing twenty-four Port Studies annually which will coincide with the NIS schedule in order to save research effort.

These studies, which describe textually and graphically a single port closely follow the topical treatment called for in the NIS outline and are readily assimilated into an NIS when produced.

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We see no reason why this production should adversely affect NIS programming and must assume that DIA has a good reason for producing single port studies.

7. Telecommunications: DIA wants to prepare publications containing the best features of the NIS Telecommunications section with more detailed information for operational purposes. A "Foreign Telecommunication Facilities" will "pick up where the NIS stops and not be duplication." DIA proposed that the commands produce this document but there was some question by the latter whether they had the capability.

Should this publication actually be produced, there apparently would be little effect on the NIS production. OBI has expressed its dissatisfaction with the present NIS Telecommunications section produced by RCA under DIA contract but for internal DIA reasons the contract is likely to continue.

8. Medical Intelligence: DIA is now producing Health and Sanitation Studies which purportedly are more in depth than their NIS counterpart and include more medical intelligence. DIA indicated that it would explore the possibility of eliminating the NIS section on this subject as "unnecessary duplication."

OBI has examined the DIA publication and found it to be largely a duplication of the NIS outline; OSI found it lacking in substance. DIA now contributes to the NIS unit on Health and Sanitation and the quality of its submission is poor. We would consider any proposal to make the NIS more responsive to military requirements so long as the broader needs of our wide range of consumers is maintained.

There has been indication since the Conference that a unanimity of view does not exist in DIA; its member on the NIS Committee has alerted this Office to a forthcoming proposal for a revised outline on this subject. At this point, we can only await developments.

9. Petroleum: A joint DIA-command effort is planned to produce "Foreign Petroleum Data" consisting of a brief textual summary and tables to show the supply situation and maps indicating refineries, pipelines, and storage facilities. The counterpart NIS section was

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cited as "too economic oriented" for military use. The commands were not enthusiastic over the proposed publication believing that it could not be dynamic or current enough for military requirements.

OBI will attempt to determine from DIA in what way the NIS treatment could be more responsive to military requirements. We suspect that the remark "too economic oriented" was ill-considered and probably could not be substantiated. At the moment, it doesn't appear that this DIA publication has a bright future.

RJM:mjc

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